

Dear Members of the Connecticut Human Services Committee:

My name is Imelda Barajas, I am from Mexico and I am 54 years old. I have lived in Hartford for 16 years. I am a member of the *Hartford Deportation Defense*. I support **HB 6616: An Act Relating to the Expansion of HUSKY Health Benefits for Persons Ineligible Due to Immigration Status**.

Having health care is important for our happiness and the tranquility of our families. If I don't have access to a primary care doctor, or a specialist, or if I need a hospital bed—what will happen to my child?

He has health insurance, but he still needs my care because he is a child with special education needs. I am the one who breathes for him, I am his eyes, I am everything for him. What would happen if I did not get to take care of a chronic illness? For example, my friend who had been diagnosed with anemia. Because she did not have insurance, she did not go for treatment because she could not pay. After a year without following the doctor's instructions, she died of leukemia. And there are many cases like hers. Many of us look for home remedies and don't go to the doctor because we can't pay.

My husband sometimes has severe headaches, and I know that he needs more in-depth treatment, but to get it, they are going to ask us for an exorbitant amount that we cannot pay. We are not asking for anything that you cannot give us. We pay taxes and we deserve access to programs like HUSKY.

I want you to put yourself in my place for a moment. Imagine being without health insurance. Having to go to a doctor and being put on a waiting list for not having insurance. I want you to stay with that thought, and analyze. Thank you and I hope you can be a support for us in this campaign.

Please support **HB 6616: An Act Relating to the Expansion of HUSKY Health Benefits for Persons Ineligible Due to Immigration Status**.

Our work does not end with extending the HUSKY to 26 years of age; we need to open access to HUSKY to all immigrants of any age. If Connecticut wants a future that includes healthy families and a stable and growing workforce, it must ensure that all undocumented people have access to health coverage.

Thanks for your time,

Imelda Barajas
Hartford CT